
What Actions Really Toughen and Energise Your Mind Better

Our bodies increasingly need our engagement and support to so we can make the best of our longevity. So do our brains. Living in a world which is changing more rapidly than ever, how can we keep up mentally, not just physically? We need our brain to be able to improvise and adapt to new situations.

Making the best of your brain

It's natural to feel your brain is simply going to deteriorate with age. Yet the evidence has been growing that this is not inevitable and can certainly be addressed effectively. This insight came about when research showed that some people with significant brain deterioration (such as Alzheimer's disease) were still highly functional. Attention became more focused on the concept of cognitive reserve – the brain's ability to improvise and identify alternative ways of getting things done.

Cognitive Reserve

Your cognitive reserve isn't a separate part of your brain. Think of it as a kind of brain fitness just as we think of physical fitness, which is something we acquire and can often retain through a range of specific actions. Retaining your cognitive reserve means you are better equipped to deal with unexpected life events – which could relate to investment decisions or could be stress, medical challenges or something external to you in the environment. These can all demand more from your brain, so you need to respond adequately to more challenging or different situations.

There is no single test available to assess your cognitive reserve, and this is further complicated by the impact of individual differences in capabilities (including memory), experience and interests.

Yet by acknowledging its importance, you can take steps to make the best of all of these with a personal approach to managing and planning your longevity.

How to nurture your cognitive reserve

The following factors work together to maintain your cognitive reserve. All are thought to contribute, so you really need an ongoing plan to keep things in reasonable balance.

- Regular exercise
- Enough sleep
- Manage stress
- Social contacts
- Challenge your brain
- Plant-focused diet

Make it happen

Longevity planning provides the process for focusing on and managing key factors which can contribute to maintaining your cognitive reserve. It helps to identify immediate steps, as well as preparing for longer term issues which will arise.

Each of us is different. The SHAPE Analyser and the Knowledge library backing up your personal longevity plan help you find and keep abreast of the right balance for you. Advice from health professionals can help you adapt your actions to suit your own situation. Financial and estate planning professionals can assist with peace of mind that your strategies in these areas are well supported.

The first step is to make a commitment to manage as well as you reasonably can, and take responsibility for managing yourself, using your longevity plan as a regular reminder of what you are seeking to achieve.

Your own longevity plan is within easy reach. If you already have a plan, click [here](#) to login, review and update your Surrounding and Health actions. To invest in a full longevity plan, please complete the form below.

It's a good idea to update your SHAPE Analyser results regularly - why not do one now?

Try your free upgraded
SHAPE Analyser now